

IN THE SPECIFICATION:

Please insert the following paragraph before the heading on page 1, line 1:

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RELATED APPLICATIONS

This application is a continuation application of U.S. Patent Application Serial No. 09/585,566, filed June 2, 2000, titled "Cutting Blade Assembly for a Microkeratome," issued as U.S. Patent No. 6,663,644 on December 16, 2003; the content of which is incorporated by reference herein in its entirety. --

Please replace the paragraph on page 10, lines 15-20, which begins with the phrase "As shown in Figure 4, the blade holder 36", with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- As shown in Figure 4, the blade holder 36 engages the inner edges 54 of the blade notch 52 50. The blade holder 36 is held in place by frictional forces between the blade holder 36 and the edges 54 to create a frictional fit. The blade holder 36 may be further secured to the blade 38 by an adhesive or other means. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 12, line 14, and ending on page 13, line 4, which begins with the phrase "The blade holder 36' is pushed", with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- The blade holder 36' is pushed onto the blade 38' until a reference surface 84 of the blade holder 36' abuts against the stop 78. The reference surface 84 ~~rest~~ rests against a corresponding reference surface 86 of the cutting head assembly 18 shown in Fig. 1. The stop 78 provides a datum point that closely controls the distance between the reference surface 84 and the cutting edge 40 of the blade 38. The distance between the reference surface 84 and the cutting edge 40 defines the cutting depth of the blade 38'. The blade holder 36' may have a pair of outer notches 88 that provide a clearance for the pins 80 when the holder 36' is pushed onto the blade '38. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning on page 13, line 15, and ending on page 14, line 6, which begins with the phrase "Figure 15 shows another embodiment", with the following rewritten paragraph:

- - Figure 15 shows another embodiment of a blade assembly 100 that includes a blade holder 102 which has one or more cavities 104. The blade holder 102 is coupled to a blade 106 by any of the embodiments shown in Figs. 2-11. The cavities 104 reduce the stiffness of the blade holder 104 so that the blade holder ~~104~~ 102 can be more readily installed into an undersized blade cavity 42. Additionally, a tool (not shown) can be inserted in a cavity 104 and used to push the blade holder 102 onto the blade ~~102~~ 106. The blade holder 102 may also have a contoured top surface 108 that reduces the surface area in contact with the cutting head assembly 18. The contoured surface 108 reduces the tolerance requirements of the holder 102 and the cavity 42. - -